

**TEMPLE OF
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ENGLISH
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**UNIT – VIII
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ENGLISH CRITICISM

English Criticism wove its origin to **Greek and Roman Criticism**. [Classical Criticism]

Greek:-

In ancient Greece, **Socrates, Plato and Aristotle** were the great philosophers. Socrates student **Plato is a founder of western criticism and philosophy**. He was the **1st to speak about art**. Plato wrote the famous book "**Republic**". In his book, *he banishes all poets from his ideal state. He calls poets as the liars. According to him art is the imitation of an imitation thrice removed from reality*. To Plato, the Philosopher is the moral guardian of the people, but the poet is the liars. So he condemns the poetic imitation. *Sir Philip Sidney says about him, "Of all philosophers, he is the most poetical."*

Aristotle:-

Aristotle was the disciple of Plato, born in Stagyrá. He was called **peripatetic philosopher**. He started the school **Lyceum** in 335 B.C. He directed the school for 13 years. He was a tutor of Alexander. **T.S. Eliot calls him a perfect critic**. He wrote many works on various subjects like,

Ethics

Metaphysics

Rhetoric and poetics

Poetics is the most valuable text on literary criticism. It contains the discussion on poetry, comedy and tragedy. He gives importance to tragedy. He gives importance to tragedy. **According to him, Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is noble**. He differs from Plato in the description on tragedy. He gives six elements of tragedy.

1. Plot
2. Character
3. Diction
4. Thought
5. Spectacle

6. Song

Plot is the most important element in tragedy. He is known for many classical terms like

- **mimesis – imitation**
- **catharsis – purification**
- **Hamartia – Tragic flaw**
- **Spoudiac – Noble character**
- **Denouement – final part [climax]**

1. Roman Criticism:-

- Begins with **Horace**, friend of Augustus Casar, ruler of Rome
- Contemporary – **Virgil (Aeneid)** and **Ovid (Metamorphoses)**
- **Horace wrote “Ars Poetica” or “Art of Poetry”**
- It is the epistle to the Roman pios.
- “Ars Poetica” gives emphasis on lyrical, pastoral, ode and satire
- **According to him the ultimate goal and poetry is to instruct and give pleasure.**

2. Longinus:-

- Known for the text **“On the sublime” @ Peri Hupsous” in Latin**
- Translated in English by Words worth as **“Elevated writing” and “Elevation of Language” by Alan Tate.**
- He speaks of the sublime qualities in ‘thought and diction’.
- 1st critic to speak about the impact of poetry on the reader.

3. Medieval Criticism:-

- In Italy, the Roman writer Dante spoke of the use of native or vernacular medium of Italian language.
- Wrote ‘the Divine Comedy’ in Italian.

4. British Criticism @ English Criticism:-

- In the Elizabethan Age, English Criticism began with **Thomas Wilson's Art of Rhetoric**". (1553)
- **Roger Ascham's School Master and Richard Tottle's "Tottle's Miscellany"** – 2 Works
- In 1589, Richard Puttenham wrote "Art of English Poesies".
- Mary Webb's "Discourse of English poetry"
- **Sir Philip Sidney's "An Apologies for Poetries"** as the defense against **Stephen Gosson's School of Abuse**".
- Sidney followed by Thomas Campion's "Art of English" Poesies"
- Samuel Daniel's "Defense of Rhyme"

5. Sir Philip Sidney:-

- English Renaissance critic – multi faceted genius
- **Spenser dedicated his work "The Shepherd's Calendar"** to him.
- His "Apology for poetry" (1583) but – pd in 1595 (Posthumous) – pd by **Willam Ponsby** as "Defense of Poesies" and **Henry Olney** or "Apologies for Poetry."
- According to Sydney, Poetry must "teach and delight"
- **Compares Poetry with two subjects,**
 1. History
 2. Philosophy
- **In Greek – 'Poesies' means 'to create'**
- **'Poet' means 'creator'**
- **Roman – Poem – Vates (Prophets)**
- **He discusses different division of Poetry.**
Pastoral, Elegiac, Iambic, Satiric, Comic, Tragic, Lyric, Heroic.

6. John Dryden:-

- **Father of English Criticism and F/O Comparative criticism**

- Neo- Classical critic – **Dr. Johnson called him F/O Eng. Criticism.**
- **T.S. Eliot called him 1st master of English criticism’**
- Dryden wrote the famous essays
- Written during Plague year 1666. **“An Essay on Dramatic Poesie” – pd in 1668**
- A parallel of poetry and painting **“Preface to fables”**
- It is the dialogue among Four Speakers.

Eugenius, Crites, Lisidius, Neander. (Dryden)

They debate on 3 topics.

1. The merits, classical Drama Vs Modern Drama

2. If the French Drama is better than English Drama

3. The Debate on rhyme Vs blank verse Drama

-Dryden says,

“Shakespeare was a Homer or the father of our dramatic poets. Johnson was the Virgil, the patron of elaborate writing. I admire him, but I love Shakespeare.”

7. Alexander Pope:-

- Wrote many essays for Neo-classical Criticism.
- They are as follows.
 1. An Essay on Criticism
 2. Preface to Shakespeare
 3. Art of Sinking in Poetry
 4. Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot
 5. Preface to the Translation of the Iliad.
- Wrote **“An Essay on Criticism”** at the age of 23. Pd. it in 1711 followed Horace.
- According to him, **a true critic should be a scholar.**

8. Dr. Johnson:-

- Great Lexicographer
- Wrote the critical essays in the journal **“The Rambler”** – edited Shakespeare in 1765.

- Wrote “**Preface to Shakespeare**”- text of descriptive Criticism – 7 units in this essay – he calls Shakespeare as “**Poet of Nature**”.
- **He defended Shakespeare’s tragic comedy**
- **His next work is “Lives of English Poets” – Contain the lives of 52 English Poets from Abraham Cowley to Thomas Gray.**
- He took four years to write Dr. Johnson attacked Milton’s “Lycidas”. **He condemns “Tom Jones” because it lacks sexual morality.**
- Dr. Johnson – moralist critic.

9. William Wordsworth:-

- Wrote the prefaces between 1798 and 1815
- **“Preface to Lyrical Ballads” in 1800 and 1802**
- Subsequently he wrote Prefaces in 1805 and 1815
- His 1802 Preface is taken as the standard Preface of Lyrical Ballads.
- Explains the theory of poetry in the line,
- **“Good Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of Powerful feeling”.**
- **According to him Poetry is not a matter of rules and regulations.**

10.Samuel Taylor Coleridge:-

- Coleridge Founding father of Modern Criticism.
- Influenced by the **German Scholar, Immanuel Kant.**
- Wrote his critical ideas in “Biographia Literaria published in 1817 – contains the discussion on Wordsworth theory of Poetry and also essays on the philosophy of **Kant and Fischre.**
- Criticises Wordsworth, known for his theory of **“Fancy and Imagination”.**

11.P.B. Shelley:-

- In the Romantic Age, after Wordsworth and S.T.Coleridge., Shelley ranks as the great critic.

- Wrote a “Defense of Poetry” (1821) and Pd. by Mary Shelley in 1840. (Posthumous) in the book called “**Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments**”.
- **He wrote it as a response to his friend Thomas Love Peacock’s essay “The Four Ages of Poetry”.**
- Analyses the inner essence of Poetry. He says, “**Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world**”.
- “**Poets are the institutors of laws and the founders of civil society.**”

12.Mathew Arnold:-

- In the Victorian Age, Mathew Arnold is a major Critic who set standard in morality, religion and arts.
- Criticises the machinery and industrial revolution
- Arnold is the son of Thomas Arnold, H.M of Rugby School.
- He speaks of culture in his essay “**Culture and Anarchy**”
- Famous essays

The Study of Poetry:-

- Classic English Criticism
- Discusses the history of English Poetry and also his touchstone method which means the selection of short passages and even single lines to test the great Poetry”. It is called Real Estimate.
- **Criticises Chaucer and Robert Burns for lack of poetic quality.**
- He speaks of high seriousness of the classics.
- He quotes 11 passages.
 - 3-Homer
 - 3-Dante
 - 3-Milton
 - 2-Shakespeare

- Arnold rated the English Romantics very low.
- Byron is inferior to the German Writer Goethe
- Arnold wrote the other essay, "Literature and Dogma". He considered literature and religion as the "two parts of culture".
- His famous books,
"Essays in Criticism": First series, Second series and Third Series".
- Famous Phrase "**Literature is a criticism of life**".

20th Century Criticism:-

1. T.S.Eliot:-

- Calls himself, "**Classicist in Literature, Royalist in Politics and an Anglo – Catholic in Religion**".
- Wrote it in his Preface to "For Lancelot Andrews"
- **Wrote the historical sense in "Traditional and Individual Talent "** in 1919.
- **Appeared in two installment in the journal "The Egoist" and later in "Times Literary Supplement"**
- His theory of Poetry is about an escape form personality
- Popularized the term "**Objective Correlative in this famous essay "Hamlet and his problems"**".
- "**Objective Correlative** , the term was coined by "**Washington Allston**".
- He also famous for – "**Unification of Sensibility**" and "**Dissociation of sensibility**".
- He explained these terms in his essay "**The Metaphysical Poets**".
- T.S. Eliot says, "**A thought to Donne was an experience; It modified his sensibility**".
- His theories, **Extension or Impersonality, Unified Sensibility and Objective Correlative**
- His criticism = Workshop Criticism

He says "**Milton Corrupted the language and he wrote English like a dead language**".

- He praises James Joyce for his work “Ulysses”
- **T.S. Eliot along with I.A. Richards Pioneered the New Criticism.**

20TH CENTURY CRITICISM

1. I.A. Richards:-

- He is called “Critical Consciousness of 20th century”
- Forerunner of new criticism
- Known for **Practical Criticism @ Classroom or objective Criticism**
- According to him, the artistic experience is not from the ordinary experience.
- In art experience, there is an inter animation of impulses
- Art is valuable because it solves our mental tension and given us release.
- Richards calls it Syntheses balancing of conflicting impulses
- **I.A. Richards along with C.K Ogden formed a theory of language. They wrote a book “The Meaning of meaning: A study of the influence of language upon thought and the science of Symbolism” – (1923).**
- They speak of two kinds of language
 1. **The Referential**
 2. **The Emotive**
- One of the essays of “The Meaning of Meaning” is “Four kinds of Meaning”. They are
 1. **Sense**
 2. **Feeling**
 3. **Tone**
 4. **Intonation**
- Poetry, According to I.A.Richards. is made up of pseudo statement. They cannot be tested in true or false. Poetry is emotive. It has no meaning or knowledge.
- His ideas are found in his books. They are,
 1. **Meaning of Meaning**
 2. **Principles of Literary Criticism**
 3. **Science and Poetry**

4. **Practical Criticism – A Study of Literary Judgments**
5. **Coleridge on Imagination**
6. **The Philosophy of Rhetoric**
7. **Speculative Instruments**

3. F.R. Leavis:-

- Known for his famous book “**New Bearings in English Poetry**”.
- Wrote his critical essay in the journal “**Scrutiny**”
- One of the critics of **New Cambridge Criticism**
- Pioneer of New Criticism

New Criticism:-

- In 20th century, New Criticism was the formalist movement in literary theory.
- Main aim is **close reading of Poetry**
- The New Critic must discover how a literary work is a **self-contained and self-referential aesthetic object**
- The movement got its name from **John Crowe Ransom’s “The New Criticism” (1941)**
- Founder – Journal **Kenyon Review**
- In this, the New Criticism he reviewed the criticism of T.S. Eliot, I.A.Richards and Yvor winters
- **But the term New Criticism. – 1st used by Joel Spingarn in 1911**
- In Ransom’s book there is an essay ‘**Wanted: An Ontological Critic**’. (1941)
- **J.C. Ransom taught New Criticism. to his students Alan Tate and Robert Penn warren**
- **Ransom was influenced by T.S. Eliot’s book “The Sacred wood”.**
- **The American New Criticism began as a reaction against historical criticism. It was against historical, biographical, sociological and cultural backgrounds.**
- The New Critics Published “**Understanding Poetry**” and “**Understanding Fiction**”.

Critics:-

1. J.C. Ransom
2. Alan Tate (Tension : Extension & Intension)
3. R.B. Blackmur
4. Robert Pen warren
5. Kenneth Burke
6. Yvor winters
7. Cleanthe Brooks (Irony)
8. **William Wimsatt &**
9. **Beardsley (Intentional Fallacy and Affective Fallacy) – mistake of judging the intention of the author**
 - **Ruskin is known for pathetic fallacy** – error of attributing emotions and feelings to non-human beings and objects.
 - **Cleanthe Brooks explains the Principles of New Criticism in his essay “The Formalist Critic”.** They are,
 1. New Critic must look into unity of literary work as a whole, not in parts.
 2. In a successful work meaning or form cannot be separated from plot.
 3. Literature is finally metaphorical and symbolic.
 4. New critics use intrinsic criticism
 5. **A close reading of the poem or work is needed to find symbols, myths and metaphors.**

According to New Critics, a poem may contain tension or irony or symbol.

Rene Wellek wrote an essay “The New Criticism”: Pro and Contra”. He analyses the merit of New Criticism. They were opposed to either plot or theme.

Their famous journals are,

The Southern Review

The Kenyon Review and the Sewanee review

New Criticism was very active till the late 1960s. It was a successful movement in England and America for nearly 30 years.

Chicago School of Criticism:-

- Famous critical school in America.
- Began in the University of Chicago in the 1930s which lasted till 1950s
- Gave importance to plot and character
- They needed biographical, sociological, cultural, historical background.
- The New Critics consider language as important. **But Chicago Critics consider plot or story as important**
- **Opposed New Critics**
- Founders:-
 1. **R.S. Crane**
 2. **W.R. Keast**
 3. **Normal Maclean**
 4. **Elder Olson**
 5. **Wayne C Booth** (Technique as Discovery)

Russian Formalism:-

- Began in Russia
- In the 2nd & 3rd decade of 20th century
- Began in 1919 in the name “**Opojaz**” (Peters Burg Society for the study of Poetic Language)
- **Opojaz group** – later joined by **Mosco Linguistic Circle**
- These two become Russian Formalism
- Ended in 1935 – 3 periods
 1. 1919 – 1921
 2. 1921 – 1928
 3. 1923 – 1935
- It died because of Stalin, Russian Dictator.

Critics:-

1. **Roman Jacobson**
2. **Victor Shklovsky**

3. Baris Elchenbaum

- It has no immediate impact outside Russia. Its principles are,
 1. Against historical, biographical, Sociological and other extrinsic approach.
 2. The Russian formalist used the two terms **Fabula (story) and Syuzhet (Structure)**
 3. They also used the two concepts:
 - a. **De familiarization Technique** – The removal – artistic images in a text
 - b. **Retardation** – The postponement of artistic enjoyment

Archetypal Criticism:-

- Different from New Criticism and Russian Formalism.
- Aims is to **focus on repeated myths and archetypes in a text**
- Started with publication **Maud Bodkin's "Archetypal Patterns in Poetry"**.
- Archetypal critics drew ideas from the theory of **"Collective Unconsciousness"**.
- The **Swiss Psychologists Carl Jung, the disciple of Freud.**
- According to **Jung coined Archetype, the collective unconscious of the whole race is expressed in the archetype.**
- **The buried experiences of the ancestors are found in the archetype of our ancestors.**
- myth can be understood as the story, as perspective

Critics:-

1. **Maud Bodkin**
2. **Leslie Fiedler**
3. **Francis Fergusson**
4. **Richard Chase**
5. **Philip Wheelwright**
6. **Wilson Knight**
7. **Northrop Frye**

- **Frye – Canadian Mythologist** who wrote three works.

1. Fearful Symmetry
2. Anatomy of Criticism
3. Fables of Identity

- Anatomy of Criticism – document of Archetypal Criticism
- Criticized New Critics
- User the term “**mythoi**” = Plot
- In his famous essay “**Archetypes of Literature**”. He speaks of two approaches

1. Inductive

2. Deductive

- He quotes the ‘**grave digger scene**’ in Hamlet
- He divides literature on the basis of four seasons.

1. Comedy – Spring

2. Romance – Summer

3. Tragedy – Autumn

4. Satire – Winter

- Discusses Milton’s Lycidas
- The movement was active between **1950 and 1970**
- Dies on the **arrival of structuralism**

Structuralism Criticism:-

- Structuralism was the discipline **in philosophy, anthropology and literary criticism.**

- Divides the world into two units

1. The Visible [Surface Structure]

2. The Invisible [Deep Structure]

- These two structures are known by the ‘signifier’ and ‘signified’.
- **Structural linguistics was developed by the Swiss Linguist Ferdinand De Saussure.**
- He delivered lectures in the **University of Geneva**, between 1906 and 1917
- His students “Took down notes

- **Published. as a book “Course in General Linguistics” (1915)**
- Posthumous.**

Theories:-

- 1. Language is a structured system of signs – Signifier and signified (word or symbol)**
 - 2. Saussure thinks of ‘langue’ and ‘Parole’.**
 - 3. The human mind always thinks of opposite in language. Binary opposition**
 - 4. The relationship between the signifier and signified is arbitrary – no connection**
- There is always one to one connection between signifier and signified.**

Critics:-

- 1. Saussure**
- 2. Roland Barthes**
- 3. A.J. Greimas**
- 4. Tzvetan Todorov**
- 5. Gerard Genette**
- 6. Claude Levi Strauss – French cultural and Structural anthropologist**
 - **It has sub field called “Semiotics”. – The Science of signs**
 - **Structuralism was attacked by Jacques Derrida.**

Deconstruction:-

- Derrida, French critic
- Found the errors in structuralism.
- According to him, a signifier may have many signified.
- **It means that a single word may contain multiple meaning**
- **It is called ‘Plurisignation’ (Multiple meaning)**
- **Derrida read his famous paper called ‘Structure Sign and play in the Discourse of Human Sciences in the conference at Johns Hopkins University in 1966.**

- He attacked the defect of structuralism.
- **Accounting to him, Language is always unreliable and fluid**
- **One word may give multiple meanings to the name person**
- *He coins the term difference – portmanteau word, of ‘Differ’ and ‘Defer’*
- Also uses the word “Bricolage” – process of assembling something from materials at hand*
- Term “Bricolage’ is used for the mechanic who assembles the machine parts
- Derrida questions the western philosophy and its centre. His principles,

1. Difference

2. Bricolage

3. Logo Centricisms Vs Phonocentricism

Critis:-

1. Derrida
 2. Barbara Johnson
 3. Catherine Belsey
 4. Gayatri spivak
 5. Hillis Miller
 6. Paul De Man
 7. Geoffrey Hartman
- **Deconstruction ended in the late 1970s**
 - **Questioned by New Historicism and cultural materialism**

New Historicisms:-

- In the late 1970s and 1980s Deconstruction was challenged by New Historicism.
- It was founded by **Stephen Green Blatt.**
- His book **“Renaissance self Fashioning”** was published in 1980.
- New Historicists believed that both **History and Literature are equal**
- **History is not context but the co-text.**
- The power of history is conveyed in the **‘discourse’**. The word discourse was coined by **Michel Foucault**

Critics:-

1. **Stephen Greenblatt**
2. **Louis Montrose**
3. **Catherine Gallagher**

Cultural Materialism:-

- Began in middle 1980s
- Founded by **Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield** in the book **“Political Shakespeare”**.
- Cultural Materialism is out of **growth of Marxism**
- According to Raymond Williams, the labour Classes are not considered in high literature
- This criticism analyses the power and marginalization in the literature - Blacks, Dalits and Women

Post- Colonial Criticism:-

- After 1945, the British and French colonies attained freedom
- **The literature of these countries in India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Africa and West Indies is analyzed by the post – Colonial Critic**
- Began in the late 1980s. It is still practiced.

Four Works:-

1. **The Wretched of the Earth –Frantz Fanon**
2. **Orientalism – Edward Said**
3. **Nation and Narration – HomiBhabha [Mimicry]**
4. **The Empire Writes Back – Helen Tiffin and Bill Ashcroft.**

Reader Response Criticism:-

- Based on the reader as a centre of reading activity.
- **Wolfgang Iser, German Critic uses the term “Implied Reader”**.
- The Writer writes the implied future reader in mind. This school has 5 theories.

1. **Transactional Reader Response Theory by Louise Rosenblatt**

2. **Affective Stylistics – Stanley Fish (His Book – “Is there any text in the classroom”?)**
3. **Subjective Reader Response by David Bleich**
4. **Psychological Reader Response by Norman Holland**
5. **Reception Theory by Robert Gush**

Psycho – Analytical Criticism:-

- Sigmund Freud
- **Speaks of the dream images in writing as displacement and condensation**
- His theory – “The Uncanny “ (Unknown) explained in “The Interpretation of Dreams”
- **Wrote an essay on Hamlet to explain Oedipus complex.**
- **Jacques Lacan (‘French Freud’) – “The Mirror Stage”.**

Marxist Criticism:-

- Founders – Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels
- **According to Marx, the artistic work contains the struggle between the capitalist and the laborer.**
- Society contains two structures
 1. **Base (Economic Structure)**
 2. **Super Structure**

1. **George Lukacs(Hungarian)**
2. **Pierre Machery (French)**
3. **Lucien Goldmann (Rumanian)**
4. **Theoder Adorno (German)**

Hermeneutics:-

- Greek Word
- Meaning – **Interpretation or explanation**

- In Greek mythology **the interpretation of Gods Was called Hermes**
- Main function – To explain the foreign work in foreign language.

Critics:-

1. R.W. Stallman

2. E.D. Hirsch (“Validity in Interpretation”)

3. Alex Preminger

4. Gadamer

5. Paul Ricoeur

- **It interpreted many scriptures including Bible and wisdom Literature**
- **It includes both written and non-verbal texts**
- **But ‘Exegesis’ focuses mainly on the written texts.**

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